



ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

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7 May 2014

General Gordon R. Sullivan
United States Army (Ret.)
President

The Honorable Ron Barber
United States House of Representatives
1029 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Barber:

I Write on behalf of the members of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) in support of the military service members and veterans provisions in the Strengthening Mental Health in Our Communities Act of 2014. As you know, many of our soldiers who are either serving or have served have made enormous sacrifices for our nation over the past decade. This important piece of legislation will help thousands of those veterans and service members receive the mental health treatment they need due to Post Traumatic Stress (PTS), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Military Sexual Trauma (MST) and any other mental hardships associated with military duty.

AUSA supports the Strengthening Mental Health in Our Communities Act of 2014 because it takes proactive measures to combat mental health problems in the military, while expanding easier accessibility to health care for mental illness to all veterans. It will also ensure collaboration on health care issues between the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs by implementing electronic health record systems that are interoperable between the VA and DoD which will ensure mental health treatment can continue as the service member transitions to civilian life. Furthermore, this legislation will make it easier to recruit much needed psychiatrists to the Veterans Health Administration by starting a pilot program for repayment of education loans.

Thank you for taking a leadership role on this important piece of legislation. Many of our service members and veterans have sacrificed so much during the past decade and beyond and can't afford to wait any longer for the mental health treatments they so desperately need and deserve.

Sincerely



GORDON R. SULLIVAN
General, USA Retired